

Where is My Mind? by eleventhewise

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Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Karen Wheeler, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Ted Wheeler, Will Byers

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Summary:

Mike Wheeler's best friend commits suicide after the ninth grade. When he enters high school, he meets Will and Eleven, who teach him about love, loss, and breaking away. Perks of Being a Wallflower AU.

1. Prologue

Mike Wheeler moved to Hawkins, Indiana the summer before the eighth grade. He sat in a cramped car with his two sisters, Holly and Nancy, next to him, his father at the wheel, and his mother looking out the window and making wonderful remarks about how charming and lovely the town they were driving into was. Mike had no say in this move; the whole thing was for his parents and their relationship in order to not fall apart.

Mike Wheeler began his school year with the fear that he would be the school's weirdo, like at the previous one. He had the same gut-wrenching feeling in his stomach as he did on the first day of kindergarten when he sat on the swings and wondered if anyone would play with him. The good part was another little boy asked for Mike to play with him. This boy would eventually become Mike's best friend for the next few years of his life. But this situation was different because he knew that there would be nobody asking to play with him and resolve the entire situation. Instead, he had to just get through the day without getting picked on by bullies or yelled at by teachers. When he got to his first class, a boy with shaggy blonde hair and a Star Wars t-shirt sat right next to him despite that there were many other empty seats. "I'm guessing you're new to Hawkins?" The boy said. His voice was enthusiastic but it wasn't irritating, and he had a look on his face that showed he was actually interested in Mike and not talking to him as if it were a joke or a dare. "U-Um yeah, I'm new here." Mike stuttered. The other boy smiled at Mike. "Ah, I could tell. You look like you're from the city." He said. Mike chuckled at the statement thinking about what made the boy remind him of the city. "Yeah, I'm guessing you're a big Star Wars fan?" Mike laughed, referring to the other boy's shirt; the other boy laughed as well. The two had a long conversation about Star Wars and *The Empire Strikes Back* and all sorts of things before class was in session. As the teacher was speaking, the boy whispered something to Mike. "I'm Henry." He said. "Mike.

Mike Wheeler became best friends with Henry as the school progressed. The two boys liked to ride their bikes back to Mike's house and play D&D or go to the arcade and play *Dragon's Lair*. Mike

and his friend would talk about people at school and how much their science teacher sucked since he could never compare to Mike's old science teacher, Mr. Clarke. Mike's mother, Karen, loved Henry and was thrilled that Mike had found a friend. Mike, however, noticed a few months into their friendship that Henry never brought up his own family nor asked Mike to come to his house. When Mike asked him why, Henry would get slightly less serious and say that his family was always busy and he wasn't allowed to have friends over when they weren't home. His answer made Mike confused, as he was allowed to have friends over when his parents weren't home, but he went along with what Henry told him. Mike went along with Henry's excuse up until the evening Mike needed back a book he lent to Henry. That day, Mike kept trying to reach Henry over his supercom, asking if he was there and receiving no response. This led to a very frustrated Mike that went downstairs and looked through the address book, only to find that Henry's house was in a part of town that he had never been to. "387 Carolina Road" He repeated in his head as he grabbed his bike and made his way to the street. It took him the course of thirty minutes to find the house, to which he frowned. The house looked as if it hadn't been repaired in years. The paint had chipped off the sides, and there were windows that had been broken. He knocked on the door and was greeted with a shocked and scared Henry peaking through the cracked-open doorway. "What are you doing here?" Henry whisper-talked in a manner that sounded slightly irritated. "I came for my book, remember? You said you-" Mike was cut off by the sound of a bottle breaking followed by an angry man yelling. Mike looked a little further through the doorway only to see a few rooms down a man screaming at a woman who was crouched down in fear. Shards of glass were scattered throughout the floor, hence the smell of alcohol burning through his nose. "I'll call you tonight," Henry whispered again, before shutting the door. Mike stood at the door for a minute and processed his thoughts. *How is he living in these conditions? Is this why we never go to his house? Is he okay?* The last thought made Mike think a little bit more. Mike went home that night not feeling hungry and not going to sleep either, as the past events from that day made him feel sick.

Mike Wheeler became increasingly more worried about his friend. As the later months wore on Henry became more and more distant of Mike, making him worry that it was his fault Henry was being so

distant. Some days Henry would come to school with big circles under his eyes and disheveled hair and ask if he could stay at Mike's house that night, to which Mike's answer would always be yes. One day Henry showed up with a black eye and it became clear to Mike that his friend wasn't okay. It wasn't until a chilly day in March when Mike told Henry he should talk to the guidance counselor at school, only for Henry to say the counselor would talk to his parents and that it would result in him taking a beating. Henry's response made Mike more upset, as he didn't want any of this for his friend. But he went along with it, because he didn't want to argue with his friend. Later that night when Henry left, Mike wept.

Mike Wheeler invited Henry over to his house one last time the day before they would get out of school for the summer. The two boys had talked about going to the lake and riding their bikes during the long, hot three month period, which made Mike excited. Mike had called Henry on his supercom that night to tell him how excited he was about tomorrow and how he could come to his house like always and how maybe they could go to the arcade. This made Henry chuckle, as it sounded like he was tired. Eventually, Mike told Henry that he was going to bed. "You're the best person in the whole world," Henry said, sounding somewhat melancholy. Mike was somewhat confused by the statement, but he smiled either way. The two hung up, and Mike went to bed feeling more anxious than usual.

Mike Wheeler would go to school the next day and see police cars swarmed around the school and teachers and students looking scared. This made Mike somewhat frightened and not wanting to know why the scene was happening. Mike kept walking trying to just get to his locker before hearing two boys, Troy and some other boy who liked to make fun of other kids, say "That faggot Henry had it coming, thank god he's dead now!" Mike froze. *Henry. He's gone.* Mike ran out of the school and hopped on his bike, tears pouring out faster than he could think. Once he got home, he sprinted up the stairs and locked himself up in his room only to be questioned by his mother as to why he was back. Mike sobbed into his pillow and stayed that way for the next few weeks. Henry's funeral made Mike cry harder.

Mike Wheeler didn't do much during the summer as he was grieving. However, in the months of September, October, and so on, Mike

would find a new set of friends. These friends would teach him about the importance of love and loss. They would teach him that the Clash was the best break up band to ever exist and that going to football games can be a great way to meeting people. He learned many things, all of which made him realize what it was like to break away from the past.

2. Chapter 1

Notes for the Chapter:

just a reminder that until the late 90s (this takes place in 89-90'), high school was only 10th, 11th, and 12th grade, meaning the kids are in their first year of high school.

Mike had woken up that morning with a headache from the sound of his mother banging on his door yelling about how he was going to be late for school. He cringed at the thought of it. *School*, he thought to himself. Everything about school now just made him feel sick to his stomach. It made him think about Henry, how he was the only part of school that was good, and how much he missed him. Sometimes he wished he could talk to his Aunt On the way to school, Nancy lectured Mike about how he was only to go in the freshmen halls and nowhere else, otherwise he'd get his ass kicked. The lecturing only made Mike's head feel worse, and he wanted to tell Nancy to stop but knew she would get ticked off and just yell at Mike more. Mike thought about the idea of walking into the new school, and how hopefully he would make friends as easily as he connected with Henry. He liked to think that maybe he would stop thinking about him and maybe not be as sad as he had been all summer. He tried to think about meeting new people, or not having to feel so lonely that he would have to sit with Nancy at lunch. Nancy stopped talking when they pulled into the school parking lot, where Mike stepped out and looked around; there were kids of all shapes and sizes from all different cliques and backgrounds surrounding the school. This made Mike gulp in fear. The number of people in the surrounding area made Mike even more anxious than he already was.

Mike looked down at the schedule he clutched in his hands. *First Period: Art. Room 39*, it read. He roamed around the school trying to find it before finally reaching the class. He stepped into the room to find that it was a class of around twenty-something kids before taking a seat. Next to him was a boy with light brown hair and big brown eyes. He wore a dark green sweatshirt and his backpack was filled with paintbrushes and colored pencils. Mike looked at his bag for a

few moments until a short woman with curly blonde hair and a kind face walked in. "Hello, all! My name is Ms. Helmer and I'm going to be teaching freshman art this year." She greeted. For the entire period, Ms. Helmer talked to the class about what they would be doing in class this school year. Mike listened to her talk, even though he started to get bored after the first fifteen minutes. He looked over to the boy sitting next to him, only to see he was drawing a very detailed picture of a girl on the sheet of paper in front of him. Mike widened his eyes in disbelief as he watched the boy detail the drawing even more. "That's really good," Mike whispered. The other boy looked at Mike and smiled. "Thanks, it's kept me from falling asleep all period." He said. Mike chuckled, as did the boy. "I'm Will by the way," he said. "I'm Mike." The bell rang.

As everyone got up and left the class, Mike let a strange sense of nostalgia from the conversation he had with Will. It reminded him of when he met Henry, and how odd it felt. Mike wondered if he and Will would sit next to him tomorrow or the next day. He wondered if he and Will would maybe even become friends, just like how he and Henry had been. Mike brushed off the thought and continued walking. The rest of the day played out not as bad as Mike had pictured. When he went to lunch he looked around and saw Will sitting with a girl who looked similar to the one he was drawing earlier in class. She had curly hair that came right above her elbows and big brown eyes similar to Will's. She was wearing a baggy striped sweatshirt and looked as if she couldn't stop laughing at something Will had said. *Pretty*, he thought. Will saw Mike and smiled, making a gesture with his hands for him to come sit with them. Mike, feeling a slight rush of excitement, walked over with his stuff and sat down. "Hi Mike!" Will said sounding much more enthusiastically than he had sounded earlier that morning. "Hey Will," Mike said more awkwardly than usual. Mike looked over towards the girl and smiled; she smiled back. "Oh Mike, this is Eleven. El, this is Mike. He's in my art class," Will introduced to the girl sitting next to him. She smiled even bigger towards Mike, making him blush. "It's nice to meet you Mike." Eleven said. "You too." Mike said as he unpacked the contents of the brown paper bag containing his lunch. Will and Eleven continued with their conversation while Mike listened. When they stopped talking for a moment, Mike said, "You both seem really happy together, how long have you been dating?" Will and Eleven

laughed, making Mike's face turn fire hydrant red. "Will's my stepbrother," Eleven said once she had finally caught her breath. "When we were eight, his mom left his asshole dad and married my nice dad." Eleven said matter of factly. "Yeah as if Hopper's any better," Will giggled. Eleven elbowed him, making the three of them laugh.

"So are you guys new to Hawkins? I don't think I've seen either of you around and Hawkins is fairly small," Mike trailed off. "Nope, just moved here from Bloomington." Will said after taking a bite out of his sandwich. "Tell us though, what's good around here?" Eleven asked. Mike blushed; *God this girl is cute*, he thought. "Well, there's this place called Brewster's downtown. It's a 24 hour diner and it's not all that bad." Mike said. "Well, we'll have to go there then." Eleven said, winking at Mike. Mike turned even more red than before. "Jesus, Eleven! Stop flirting with the kid!" Will said half-jokingly as Eleven cackled. Mike laughed along with them. "Hey, just wondering, why do you go by the name Eleven?" Mike asked, curiosity filling his mind. "Well," she began, "my birthday is the eleventh day of the eleventh month. When I told Will that he thought it was cool, and eventually he started calling me Eleven. My dad and Joyce don't call me Eleven but sometimes I wish they did, I hate my real name." She rambled, yet she talked about it like it was her greatest achievement. Mike assumed that Joyce was Eleven's stepmom, Will's mom. Before he got another word out, the bell rang ending their lunch period. Will and Eleven got up from the table and so did Mike. "I guess I'll see you in art tomorrow?" Will asked. Mike nodded his head and looked at Eleven. "Hey maybe we might have a class together." He said sounding more awkward than he had throughout the previous forty-five minutes. Eleven smiled and nodded; "Yeah, I hope we do," she said. "Hey loser, are you done flirting?" Will yelled jokingly, beginning to walk away. Eleven rolled her eyes, before running off and waving goodbye. Mike smiled as she walked off with Will.

2:31 Mike's watch read. *Forty-four minutes until he got to go home*, he thought. He was in his last class of the day, English. English was one of his favorite subjects, other than science and now art thanks to Will. Mike sat patiently while waiting for the class to start. He listened to other students in the class have conversations with their

friends, but he mainly thought about Eleven. She's so pretty, he thought. His thoughts were cut off when a man walked in the class. He stood up at the front of the classroom and quieted down the students by lowering his hands. "I'm Mr. Harding, I'll be your English teacher for the rest of the school year." He said. Mr. Harding was very tall and very thin, but not as thin as Will. He was wearing a suit and he had thick-rimmed glasses perched on his nose. "This year we'll be reading five books," Mr. Harding began, "we'll be reading *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald." he said somewhat dramatically. He continued, "we will be reading *The Grapes of Wrath*, by John Steinbeck." Mike perked up; John Steinbeck was one of his favorite authors, if not his most favorite. "we'll read a more coming of age story, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston." Mike remembered Nancy coming home every day for months going on about how great that book was; Mike smiled at the memory. "We'll be reading a story that, to me," he chuckled to himself, "symbolizes irony, *1984* by George Orwell," he said, "and lastly, we'll finish off our school year by reading a Shakespearian classic, *Hamlet*." He finished. The class had probably lost their entire interest by the time he started speaking, but Mike was all ears, wanting to know anything and everything about what they would be doing in his class for the rest of the year. Mr. Harding continued his lecture about the books they'd be reading up until the bell rang. Mike was almost out of the door before Mr. Harding stopped him. "I could tell you were the only one in the room interested." He said. Mike's face began to turn slightly red (when was it not). "I love books, sir." He responded. Mr. Harding raised his eyebrows, "I can see that. What if I gave you a different book recommendation each month?" The man offered. Mike smiled a little bit. "I'd love that, sir." He responded.

Later that night at dinner, Mike sat with his family eating quietly while his parents talked, before turning the conversation to Mike and his sisters. "So how was your first day back?" Karen asked to whoever wanted to describe their day first. "It was good," Nancy spoke up. "Really? What happened." Ted asked trying to sound excited but being more focused on his dinner. "Well, I met this boy named Steve Harrington. He's really nice and he's my lab partner for this year. Oh, and he also asked me if we could hang out this weekend?" She babbled on. Nancy was a senior in high school and loved any attention she got from boys, especially if they were guys

like Steve Harrington, who was, to Mike at least, a 'Grade A asshole'. "You can go to his house as long as there's no fooling around," Ted said sounding unamused and not looking up. Nancy rolled her eyes, before looking over at Mike. "So how was your first day of high school?" She asked in a slightly mocking tone. He gave Nancy a deadpanned look before speaking up. "It was good. My English teacher's really cool and his class seems like it'll be fun." Mike explained. "What a nerd," Nancy mumbled under her breath. "Hey! We are NOT tolerating this at the dinner table!" Karen scolded. Holly looked somewhat frightened and eventually started crying at the sound of her mother yelling, making Karen take her out of her high-chair and leaving.

The rest of the dinner was somewhat uncomfortable, but it wasn't unusual. Eventually, they went their separate ways to go to bed, Mike and Nancy to their rooms and Ted to his La-Z-Boy. Mike went to bed that night feeling happy. He had made two good friends, one of which was a very pretty girl that Mike may or may not have developed a crush on, and another being a boy who was artistically gifted and seemed to be one of the better boys in Hawkins High School. He had met a man who seemed to be great at teaching and Mike was excited to have him as a teacher the rest of the school year, and he couldn't wait for the books that Mr. Harding would tell him to read, knowing they would all be fantastic.

Mike realized that he hadn't been this happy since the day he met Henry.

3. Chapter 2

Notes for the Chapter:

hello i just wanted to apologize for the wait of this chapter. thank you for the kudos and comments!!

The following weeks were okay for Mike. He continued to sit with Will and Eleven, and as the weeks went on, they made more friends. Eleven became closer to a girl named Max, who liked to call herself Madmax. Mike didn't exactly know why she called herself this, but he thinks that her nickname is a partial reason as to why Eleven was so determined to be her friend. Max had fiery red hair and liked to skateboard everywhere she went. She would skate down the halls during school even when the teachers yelled at her not to. Will, however, had become friends with two boys named Dustin and Lucas. Mike remembered seeing them a lot during school last year, but he never talked to them even though they always seemed cool. Lucas and Dustin had lived in Hawkins their whole life and were both extremely close with each other, although recently Lucas seemed to have a bit of a crush on Max even though he wouldn't admit it. Mike, although he didn't want to tell his friends, still felt somewhat lonely. Will had assured him that everyone they hung out with liked him and to not worry about it, although telling him to stop worrying didn't make it all that much better. Mike learned that Will had an older brother named Jonathon. He was in Nancy's grade and Will looked up to him a lot. Mike was guessing that Nancy was friends with Jonathon or at least knew about him, because when he told her she was friends with Will and Eleven, she said that Will used to get made fun of so badly at school that he had to be homeschooled before they moved, and that Eleven would get laid by high school boys when she was only in middle school, because she'd tell them she was older. How Nancy knew this, Mike didn't know. He didn't *want* to know. So he stayed quiet about it, not asking Nancy nor Will or Eleven. He didn't want to get involved.

Friday night was the school's homecoming dance, and Mike had already declared that he wasn't going even though Eleven had begged him to go with her and the group. He knew Nancy wasn't

going to the dance, as it wasn't 'cool' for the upperclassmen to go. Instead, she would be hanging out with Steve, her new boyfriend. Eleven had eventually accepted the fact that he wouldn't be going and decided to stop bothering him about it when he said he had other plans. "And what are these other plans, Michael?" she asked crossing her arms as they walked down the hallway. "My mom and dad will be out and I've gotta watch Holly." He lied; Eleven laughed. "Yeah, yeah right. Your parents are going to be home by eight, you're going to go and scurry off to your room, listen to Simon and Garfunkel while reading whatever classic novel it is now.." She said. "Sounds about right." Mike laughed. Eleven huffed and hit his arm playfully. "Well I don't know about you but *I'm* going to homecoming with everyone while you sit at home." She said. Mike rolled his eyes, before seeing that he was at his classroom. "Well, you have fun then." He said walking inside. Eleven rolled her eyes as he walked in, before walking to her own class.

The day came and Mike realized he was doing exactly as Eleven had said; sitting on his bed, listening to a tape recording of *Baby Driver* by Simon and Garfunkel, while rereading *The Catcher in the Rye* for the umpteenth time. Mike was laying on his bed reading his book when he heard a car honk from outside. Mike frowned and set his book down, standing up from his bed to go look out the window. He opened the window only to see Will popping his head out of his car window. "Come on man!" He yelled. Mike widened his eyes in surprise. "Why aren't you guys at the dance?" He yelled. "It got boring, are you coming or not?" Will responded sounding like he was in a hurry. Mike sighed, "Yeah hang on." he said, closing his window to go put on his shoes and jacket. "I'm going out with friends, mom!" He yelled to his mother in the other room. "Don't be out too late!" She said as Mike walked out the door.

When Mike got in the car, he noticed that Eleven was sitting in the passenger's seat next to Will; She was wearing an off the shoulder black dress that came right above her knees, and her hair was down but it looked like she put effort into it, which wasn't like her since her hair was usually in all different directions, and if you looked closely you could see she was wearing a bit of makeup. Mike began to feel knots in his stomach from the idea of being with Eleven and seeing her all dressed up, making him blush (when was he not

blushing). “Hey Eleven,” he said shyly. Eleven turned her head to look at Mike. She smiled, “Hey, so much for ‘I’m watching my sister’.” she smirked. Mike laughed, “I guess you were right about what you said.” They both giggled. Will rolled his eyes. “You guys are gross.” He said as he drove off. “Where’re we going?” Mike asked, realizing they were almost on the highway. “We’re going to Brewsters, since you told us how good it was, and then back to our place.” Will said.

As they were driving to Brewster’s, a song came on the radio. Eleven turned it up, her eyes began to gleam as if she had an idea. “Oh my god. What is this song?” She said in an excited tone. “Right? I have no idea.” Will said keeping his eyes on the road. Eleven looked at Mike, who was sitting in the back. “Have you heard this?” She asked him. “Never.” He shook his head no. Eleven looked back up at the boy driving. “Will, we have to go through the tunnel.” Will rolled his eyes. “No it’s freezing outside and we’re going to Brewst-“ He was cut off. “Will, come on! It’s the perfect song, please? Can we just do it once? *Please?*” She pleaded. He rolled his eyes and smirked again. “Fine! But you owe me!” He said as he drove his car a different direction than planned. When they got to the tunnel, Eleven popped down the sunroof and stood up from the back of the car. Mike looked concerned; “What’s she doing?” He asked. Will chuckled, “She does this all the time don’t worry.” He said with no concern in his voice whatsoever. Mike looked up and saw Eleven putting her hands out as if she were flying as they began to drive through the tunnel. Will blasted the song, and Eleven looked like she was the happiest she could get. She tilted her head back and smiled, her hair flying backward. Mike looked at her in awe and adoration. To him, she looked beautiful. *She looks free*, he thought. He turned back with a huge grin on his face. “What?” Will asked him. Mike looked over at him and simply said, “I feel infinite.”

They went to Brewster’s and stayed for quite a while. They talked and laughed for hours about everything and anything. Mike learned that Will wanted to go up to New York after high school since he’d never been and Eleven wanted to study anthropology in college. He learned that both of them thought The Clash was the best band of all time, and that if Mike liked them he’d for sure like The Who. Will and Eleven learned that Mike was from Indianapolis and how he

wants to move back there at some point in his life. They talked about their futures and what they wanted for the rest of their lives and so forth. Mike realized that if he had to pick one of the best nights of his life, he would choose this one.

“My dad might seem somewhat uptight, but don’t worry he’s fine. In fact, the reason he might be all weird is that he’s had a hard day or some-“ She rambled as they pulled into the driveway before being cut off. “El it is FINE. Hopper is not that bad, you just think he’s going to act all aggressively.” Will said sounding irritated. Eleven pursed her lips and rolled her eyes before getting out of the car with the boys. Mike’s eyes scanned over what was Will and Eleven’s house; it was a ranch house that sat on a big field. *Better than my house*, Mike thought, thinking of his own house that felt oddly too big and too much to his mother’s liking than the rest of his family’s. He liked this house though, it had something warm about it. When they walked inside, they were greeted by Will’s mother. “Hey! How was the dance?” A woman with brown hair and a plaid shirt said walking around the corner. She looked so much like Will that it made Mike a little bit astonished. “Eh we didn’t go, it seemed sort of lame. Oh, this is Mike by the way. Mike, this is my mom.” He said, introducing the two. “Hi, I’m Joyce.” She said warmly. “Mike.” He responded shaking her hand. “Dad’s going to be home soon, have you guys eaten yet?” She asked. “Yeah, we went to Brewster’s for a while. It was good, you and Hop should go.” Eleven said as they started walking down the hall to Will’s room. “We’ll have to check it out then.” She smiled before walking back to the kitchen.

Hours passed it had gotten very late, and Will and Eleven had thought of a horribly good idea: to steal the bottle of wine in the kitchen. The idea made Mike somewhat nervous, as he’d never had alcohol outside of the occasional family gathering where his father would allow him to have a sip of whatever he was drinking when his mom wasn’t looking. Eleven came back with a bottle of red wine and three glasses before passing them out to the boys. Mike gulped as he saw her pour the wine evenly into each glass, before taking a big sip and wincing at how much it burned his throat. Eleven giggled, “You’re supposed to take little sips.” She said trying to help him so that he didn’t keep burning his throat with the substance. They continued to drink until Mike had drank a *tad* too much and got a

little bit tipsy. Will only drank one glass, Eleven two, but after Mike's fourth drink he started to laugh at everything anyone said, which made Eleven and Will a little ashamed since they didn't mean to get him drunk.

"Mike I'm making a milkshake, come with me." Will said getting up. Mike was a little woozy from the amount of wine he had just drank and wasn't entirely sure what Will had just said but went along with it. "Okay!" Mike said giggling as he stood up and walked with Will into the kitchen. Will got out a tub of ice cream from the freezer and pulled the blender out from one of the cabinets. "Will you're such a good artist. Like the kind of good that deserves to be recognized in museums, you know?" Mike said, mumbling some of his words making it hard to understand. Will grinned at his words; "Okay, Mike. Let me make the milkshake." He responded. Mike giggled at his words, even though they weren't all that funny to begin with. But for now, everything to Mike was going to be funny. "So, I'm guessing you've never been drunk before?" Will asked the boy sitting across from him. Mike nodded. "No. No, no, never. My best friend Henry, his dad was a big drinker so Henry hated all that stuff." Mike rambled. "Well, where's Henry tonight?" Will asked. "Oh, Henry shot himself last June," Mike said, with no problem at all as if he wasn't sad. Well, of course Mike was sad about Henry, but not when he was in this state. Will looked up at Mike with a shocked and sad expression. "I kind of wish Henry left a note. You know what I mean?" It was almost like Mike had turned stone cold sober when he said those words. A pain in Will's chest had formed and he finally understood the times when Mike would get down on some days and not want to hang out, or why he would get so anxious meeting new people. "Where's the bathroom?" Mike asked. Will woke up from his thoughts. "Oh, um, it's that way." He pointed towards the left. Mike got up and smiled. "Thanks Will." He said, sounding genuine. Will felt awful. Even though she had talked to him about it in the past, Will could never imagine losing Eleven. The words repeated in Will's head. "*He shot himself last June*". Will shivered, before leaving the halfway made milkshake behind and going back to his room to go and talk to Eleven.

Eleven was taking a sip of the water she had brought in a while ago when Will walked in. "Hey, where's Mike?" She asked sounding

slightly as if she had drank too much as well. "He's in the bathroom, but um, I need to tell you something El." He began. Eleven furrowed her eyebrows. "What's the matter?" She asked sounding increasingly worried. Will took a deep breath before getting to the purpose of what he was about to say. "Mike just told me that his best friend shot himself," Eleven's eyes widened. Will continued, "I think we're his only friends-" Will was cut short when Mike walked in the room. "Hey man, I lost you!" He said sitting down. Will laughed nervously before doing something he would hopefully not regret. "Hey, El? Mike?" He said trying to get both of his friends' attention. The two of them looked at him putting their cups down. "Let's raise our glasses to Mike." Mike looked confused as he grabbed his drink. "What did I do?" He asked. Eleven and Will smiled. "You didn't do anything. We just wanna toast to our new friend." Will continued. Mike half smiled, looking both happy and sad. "What is it?" Will asked a little nervously. Mike smiled more. "I just didn't think anyone noticed me," he said softly. They chuckled; "Well, we didn't think there was anyone cool left to meet," he said laughing a bit, "so, come one everyone." Will raised his cup, as did everyone else. "To Mike." He said. "To Mike." The three repeated, before taking a sip of what was left in their cups.